Message Text

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O 131612Z JAN 78 FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 310

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FOR ARA/CAR MR. HEWITT FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, ECON, EAGR, BF

SUBJ: POULTRY AND EGG PRODUCTION

REF: 77 NASSAU 1303 AND 1745 (BOTH BAHAMAS AGRICULTURAL CORP. PRIVATE TRADE OPPORTUNITY SUBMISSIONS)

- 1. PRIME MINISTER PINDLING CALLED ME ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JAN 12, AND SAID HE REALIZED GCOB NEEDED ADVICE FROM EXPERTS IN FIELD OF POULTRY AND EGG PRODUCTION TO ASSIST THEM IN DETERMINING WHAT TO DO WITH THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED HATCHET BAY POULTRY AND EGG FACILITY, LOCATED ON ELEUTHERA ISLAND. HATCHET BAY HAS BEEN A FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL DISASTER SINCE GCOB PURCHASED IT FROM U.S. OWNERS IN 1975. PRIME MINISTER DESPERATELY WANTS TO TURN IT AROUND, NOT ONLY TO SALVAGE GCOB INVESTMENT, WHICH IS SUBSTANTIAL, BUT ALSO TO MAKE IT A VIABLE BUSINESS WHICH CAN PROVIDE NEEDED JOBS FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED EMPLOYEES AND TO INCREASE BAHAMIAN SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD PRODUCTION. IT IS ALSO OF CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE TO PRIME MINISTER.
- 2. PRIME MINISTER SPECIFICALLY SUGGESTED THAT HE THOUGHT (WITH MY GEORGIA BACKGROUND) I MIGHT PERSONALLY KNOW INDIVIDUALS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHOM I COULD RECOMMEND TO HIM AS CONSULTANTS, ON THE SHORT RANGE, TO INSPECT, EVALUATE, AND ADVISE GCOB WHAT THEY SHOULD DO TO CORRECT PRESENT SITUATION AND THEN, POSSIBLY, ON LONG RANGE, TO ACTUALLY ASSIST IN OPERATING HATCHET BAY, PERHAPS ON A LEASE BASIS.

3. POSSIBLY WE SHOULD BE FLATTERED THAT PRIME MINISTER IS

SEEKING OUR ADVICE AND COUNSEL. HE WANTS ACTION NOW, AS TO SAVE HATCHET BAY IT MUST RECEIVE PROMPT AID, AND I HOPE WE CAN RESPOND IN AN IMMEDIATE AND POSITIVE FASHION.

4. I PERSONALLY KNOW THAT THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS IN AND AROUND GEORGIA (AT ONE TIME SAID TO BE POULTRY CAPITAL OF THE WORLD) WHO PROBABLY QUALIFY FOR WHAT PRIME MINISTER IS SEEKING, BUT IN MY OPINION THIS SHOULD BE DONE OFFICIALLY THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT AND NOT ON A PERSONAL BASIS. MAY I URGE DEPARTMENT TO RECOGNIZE IMPORTANCE OF OUR HELPING IN THIS SITUATION. GCOB IS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED WITH LACK OF POSITIVE RESULTS FROM CAB. WE NEED TO PRODUCE SOME RESULTS IN THIS SITUATION. IT WILL BE OF TREMENDOUS ASSISTANCE IN SETTING STAGE FOR FUTURE TALKS ON ISSUES OF SUBSTANTIAL IMPORTANCE TO US. PLEASE PROVIDE ME SOONEST WITH YOUR VIEWS ON HOW WE SHOULD BEST PROCEED IN RESPONDING TO REQUEST. SCHWARTZ

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